THE REHEARSAL.

1. The *Explanatory Act* is according to *Law* in *Scotland.*
2. The *three Exceptions* made againſt the *Teſt* by the *Biſhops* and *Clergy* there.
3. How the *Favour* of *Good Princes* ought to be *Improv'd.*
4. The *Security* of the *Church* in Standing to her *Principle.*
5. That *Principle* fully *Recogniz'd* in the *Explanatory Act.*
6. It is the *ſame* in *England* as in *Scotland*, and in all *Countries.*
7. The *Presbyterians* never *Prevail'd* ſo much againſt *Eraſtianiſm.*
8. They *Abjure* it, and at the ſame time make uſe of it againſt the *Church* in *Scotland.*
9. Advice to the *Cameronians* to Return to the *Church.*

WEDNESDAY, *December* 11. 1706.

(1.) *Country-m.* WAS the *Explanatory Act* of the *Teſt* you gave Us in your Laſt, *Maſter*, confirm'd by any after *Parliament*?

Rehearſal. Ther was no need of it. For as I told you, by the *Conſtitution* in *Scotland* the *King* and *Council* have full *Power* and *Authority* to *Explain* the *Senſe* of any *Act* of *Parliament*, and it is *Law* and *Valid*, till *Repeal'd* by *Parliament.* And the *Silence* of ſo many *Parliaments* ſince that time, *Confirms* this ſtill to be *Law.* And the *Tenure* of it ſhews it. For this *Act* do's *Explain* what the *Senſe* of the *Parliament* was. And proceeds to *Allow*, *Authorize* and *Empower* the *Arch-Biſhops* and *Biſhops*, to Adminiſter that *Oath* and *Teſt*, in *this Expreſs ſenſe.* And the *King*, in his *Letter*, Call's it an *Explanatory Act.* And you muſt ſuppoſe the *King* and *Councill* to know the *Law* and *Conſtitution* of the *Kingdom.* And that if it had not been ſo, the *Parliament* wou'd have taken Notice of it, as a *Fundamental Breach* of the *Conſtitution*, and *Power* of *Parliaments.* And might have Queſtion'd the *Biſhops* and *Clergy* for taking the *Oath* in any other *Senſe* than that *Declar'd* by *Parliament.* The *Earl* of *Argyle*, Father to the Late *Earl*, was *Sentenc'd* to *Death* by the *Law* there; for *Leaſing-Making*, that is, for taking upon him to put his *Senſe* upon a *Clauſe* of an *Act* of *Parliament.* And all the *Lords* of the *Privy-Council* who *Sign'd* that *Explanatory Act* of the *Teſt*, had been under the ſame *Condemnation*, if they had not had *Authority* by *Law* ſo to do.

(2.) *Country-m.* This ſeems Plain, according to the *Conſtitution* of that *Country.* But, *Maſter*, ther are ſeveral things in that *Explanatory Act* which I do not Underſtand, as what it ſays about the *Confeſſion of Faith*, of *Epiſcopacy* being liable to *Alteration* or *Subverſion*, &c. Let me know what the Meaning of theſe things are.

Rehearſ. The *Explanatory Act* mentions the *Objections* which the *Biſhops* and *Clergy* made againſt the *Oath* and *Teſt* that was impos'd, purſuant to the *Aſſertory Act*, Concerning the *Power* of the *Crown* in *Eccleſiaſtical* affairs, as to the *Outward Government* and *Polity* of the *Church.*

The *Firſt* was, That by this *Teſt* they Suppos'd they were Oblig'd to *Swear* to the *Confeſſion of Faith* there Mention'd, in which ther were ſeverai things they *Excepted* againſt. But this Concerns not our Preſent *Purpoſe.*

The *Second* was, That it was an *Invaſion* upon the *Intrinſick Spiritual Power of the Church, or Power of the Keys.*

The *Third* was, That it *Aſſerted* ſuch *Power* in the *Crown*, as might *Hazard* the *Alteration* or *Subverſion* of *Epiſcopacy*, then by *Law* Eſtabliſh'd. Which that *Church* has ſadly Experienc'd ſince. But here all the *Aſſurance* is given them that a King cou'd expreſs in words, to put them out of all *Fear* of *Danger* to the *Church.*

(3.) *Country-m.* Therefore the *Grace* and *Favour* of Good *Princes* towards the *Church*, ought ſo to be made Uſe of and *Improv'd* in their time who are willing to Grant all *Security* to the *Church*, as to put her out of *Danger* of *Succeſſors*, who may bear a leſs Favourable *Aſpect* towards her.

Rehearſ. The late K. *James* was then *Lord High Commiſſioner* in *Scotland*, under his Brother K. *Char.* 2. And Granted this *Explanatory Act* to the *Epiſcopal Church* there, which K. *Charles* Confirm'd. And that *Church* out-Liv'd both theſe *Reigns*, but *Periſh'd* in the *Next.*

Country-m. And yet that was no *Popiſh* Reign. Theſe are *Strange* things, *Maſter*! But what is it then that can ſecure the *Church* from ſuch *Events*?

(4.) *Rehearſ.* Nothing (under *God*) but ſtanding upon her own *Bottom.* Upon that *Foundation* on which *Chriſt* at firſt *Built* her, that is, *upon the Foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himſelf being the Chief Corner Stone.* As it is ſaid, *Eph.* 2. 20.

20. It is not ſaid, upon the *Foundation* of *Kings* and *Parliaments*. Theſe (being *Chriſtian*) ought to *Support* and *Protect* the *Church*. But ſhe is not *Built* upon their *Foundation*. She may ſuffer *Perſecution* from them, but can never be *Deſtroy'd* by them upon *Principle*, while ſhe keeps to her *Foundation*. But when ſhe Departs from that, ſhe *Deſtroys* her ſelf, and is *Felo de ſe*. Beſides being *Anſwerable* to *God* for *Breach* of *Truſt*, and *Surrendring* the *Charter* he had given her, and which *Chriſt* Purchaſed with his own *Blood*.

(5.) All which is fully *Recogniz'd* in this *Explanatory Act*, whereby all the *Intrinſick Spiritual Power of the Church, or Power of the Keys, as it was Exerced by the Apoſtles, and the moſt Pure and Primitive Church in the firſt three Centuries after Chriſt, is ſtill reſerved Intirely to the Church.*

Now during theſe *three Centuries* the *Church* was under *Heathen Princes*, and often under their *Perſecution*; and therefore was wholly *Independent* of them, as to being a *Church*. And the ſame *Right* is here *Recogniz'd* to her, under *Chriſtian Princes*. For it wou'd be *Strange* the *Church* ſhou'd *Loſe* any of her *Rights* by *Princes* becoming *Chriſtian!* That inſtead of being her *Sons*, they ſhou'd turn her *Enemies*, and *Invade* that *Power* with which *Chriſt* their *Father* had *Inveſted* her!

(6.) *Country-m.* But may be this was only as to the *Church* in *Scotland*. And that theſe were *Privileges* the *King* was Pleas'd to *Grant* to them.

Rehearſ. No, *Country-man*, the *Power* which *Chriſt* left to His *Church*, which was *Exercis'd* by the *Apoſtles*, and the *Primitive Church* for 300 *Years* after, was not *Granted* by K. *Char.* II.

And he takes no ſuch thing upon him, as to *Grant* this *Power* to the *Church*, as holding it from him. But he *Recognizes*, *Owns*, and *Acknowleges* this *Power* as *Granted* by *Chriſt*, and *Inherent* in the *Church*. And therefor not in his *Power*, or any *Power* upon *Earth* to *Alter* or *Invade*, which he here *Renounces* as far from his *Intention*.

And the *Church* of *Scotland* has no other *Charter* than the *Church* of *England*, and all other *Chriſtian Churches*. There is but one *Epiſcopat* upon the whole *Earth*. They all Hold by the ſame *Tenure*. And what affects *One*, affects *All*. It may be more *Favour'd* by the *Civil Government* in one *Kingdom* than Another. But its *Right* is the ſame in *All*. And the ſame *Power* that can *Aboliſh* it in one *Kingdom*, may in Another, and over all the *World*. Therefore *Chriſt* left it not *There*, but upon Another *Foundation*.

(7.) *Country-m.* The *Presbyterians* in *Scotland* have often Cry'd out againſt *Eraſtianiſm*, and Objected it againſt the *Epiſcopal Church* there. They have not fail'd to *Abjure* it, in all their *Covenants* and *Aſſociations*, and Join it ſtill with *Prelacy*, as if they were the ſame. But can they Produce ſuch an *Inſtance*, in all the Times of their *Prevailing*, wherever they brought the *State* to ſuch an *Acknowlegement* of the *Independency* of the *Church*, as in this of the *Explanatory Act*? And this, by the *Reſolute* ſtanding out of the *Biſhops* and *Clergy* againſt a *Penal Act* of *Paliament*, in Defence of the *Church* of *Chriſt*; which then did, and ever muſt *Prevaile* when Aſſerted with the ſame *Truth* and *Courage*. For Men muſt either Renounce *Chriſtianity*, or *Acknowlege* the *Independency* of the *Church*; ſince *Chriſt* moſt Certainly *Founded* her *Independent* of all *Powers* upon *Earth*.

(8.) *Rehearſ.* But to ſee the *Presbyterians* fly to *Eraſtianiſm* as their *Refuge*, at the ſame time that they are *Abjuring* it! It is now their Conſtant *Theam* and *Argument* againſt the *Epiſcopal Clergy* in *Scotland*, that they Preſume to Exerciſe their *Function*, after being *Depriv'd* by the *Privy Councill*. As it is worded in the late *Addreſs* of the *Commiſſion* of the *General Aſſembly* laſt *Month* to the *Parliament* in *Scotland*, Printed in the *Flying-Poſt*, of 26. *Nov.* laſt. and ſeveral others before, which I have had Occaſion to Mention.

(9.) *Country-m.* Where are you now, O ye *Cameronians*, ye *true-Blew, Old, Right PRESBYTERIANS*! You ſee *Eraſtianiſm* not only *Conniv'd* at, but *Pleaded* by your *Kirk* againſt the *Epiſcopal Clergy*: For ſhame, Leave your *Trimming KIRK*, and come to the *Epiſcopal Church* among you; which has *Suffer'd* in Oppoſition to *Eraſtianiſm*, by which ſhe was *Depriv'd*. Stand to your *Principles*, and mind not *Pretences*, unleſs you too wou'd be Reckon'd as *Hypocrites!*

Errata No. 163. p. 2. Col. 2. l. 6. after our r. the line. 8.

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London Printed and Sold by the Bookſellers of *London* and *Weſtminſter*. 1706.